

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A photographing operation control device for an electronic still camera, comprising:

a volatile buffer memory that temporarily stores image data obtained through a photographing optical system and is configured to overwrite the image data with subsequent image data obtained from a subsequent photographing operation;

a blank photographing operation performing processor that performs a photographing operation in a blank photographing mode, such that upon photographing, said image data is stored in said buffer memory without being stored in a recording medium, when no recording medium is installed in the electronic still camera, when a recording medium without a blank recording area sufficient to store said image data is installed in the electronic still camera, and when a recording medium, having a blank recording area sufficient to store said image data, is installed in the electronic still camera;

a recording medium sensing processor that senses whether the recording medium is mounted;

a blank recording area sensing processor that senses whether a blank recording area exists in the recording medium;

a normal photographing operation performing processor that performs a photographing operation in a normal photographing mode in which, after storing said image data in said buffer memory, said image data is read from said buffer memory and recorded in the recording medium; **[and]**

a photographing mode selecting processor that selects one of said blank photographing mode and said normal photographing mode, said photographing mode selecting processor being able to select said blank photographing mode when said recording medium sensing processor and said blank recording area sensing processor sense that the recording medium having the blank recording area is installed in said device,

wherein said blank photographing operation performing processor performs said photographing operation in said blank photographing mode when said recording medium sensing processor senses that said recording medium is not mounted; and

wherein the volatile buffer memory is configured such that, in the blank photographing mode, image data in the volatile buffer memory is overwritten with the subsequent image data without previously having been transferred to the recording medium.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 1, wherein said photographing mode selecting processor comprises a photographing mode set switch, by which said blank photographing mode is set, and which is provided in a camera body of the electronic still camera.

4. (Canceled)

5. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 1, wherein said blank photographing operation performing processor performs said photographing operation in said blank photographing mode when said blank recording area sensing processor senses that the recording medium has no blank recording area.

6. (Canceled)

7. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 1, further comprising an image data transfer processor that transfers said image data stored in said buffer to the recording medium.

8. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 7, wherein said image data transfer processor transfers said image data to the recording medium when said normal photographing mode is set.

9. (Original) A device according to claim 1, further comprising a mode informing processor that informs that said blank photographing mode is set.

10. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 1, further comprising a non-mounting condition informing processor that informs that the recording medium is not mounted.

11. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 1, further comprising a non-existing condition informing processor that informs that the recording medium has no blank recording area.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A photographing operation control device for an electronic still camera, comprising:

a system controller;

a volatile buffer memory for temporarily storing image data and which is configured to overwrite the image data with subsequent image data obtained from a subsequent photographing operation;

a photographing mode set switch for switching a photographing operation between a normal photographing mode and a blank photographing mode,

wherein, when said photographing operation is set to said normal photographing mode and an image is photographed, said system controller temporarily stores image data in said buffer memory and subsequently automatically transfers said image data to a recording medium,

wherein when said photographing operation is set to said blank photographing mode and an image is photographed, said system controller stores image data in said buffer memory and does not automatically transfer said image data to a recording medium,

wherein when a recording medium is not installed in said electronic still camera, said system controller automatically sets said photographing operation to said blank photographing mode, and

when a recording medium is installed but does not include a blank recording area sufficient to store image data, said system controller automatically sets said photographing operation to said blank photographing mode; and

wherein the volatile buffer memory is configured such that, in the blank photographing mode, image data in the volatile buffer memory is overwritten with the subsequent image data without previously having been transferred to the recording medium.

14. (Canceled)

15. (Previously Presented) The photographing operation control device according to claim 1, wherein, upon a change from the blank photographing mode to the normal photographing mode, image data stored in the volatile buffer memory is transferred to the recording medium.

16. (Previously Presented) The photographing operation control device according to claim 13, wherein, upon a change from the blank photographing mode to the normal photographing mode, image data stored in the volatile buffer memory is transferred to the recording medium.

17. (Previously Presented) The photographing operation control device according to claim 1, wherein in the normal photographing mode, all image data recorded in the recording medium has been transferred to the recording medium from the volatile buffer memory.

18. (Previously Presented) The photographing operation control device according to claim 13, wherein in the normal photographing mode, all image data recorded in the recording medium has been transferred to the recording medium from the volatile buffer memory.

19. (Previously Presented) The photographing operation control device according to claim 1, wherein repeated photographing operations in the blank

photographing mode overwrite image data in the volatile buffer memory without an intervening transfer of the overwritten image data to the recording medium.

20. (Previously Presented) The photographing operation control device according to claim 13, wherein repeated photographing operations in the blank photographing mode overwrite image data in the volatile buffer memory without an intervening transfer of the overwritten image data to the recording medium.

21. (Canceled)

22. (Canceled)

23. (Previously Presented) The photographing operation control device according to claim 1, wherein, upon selection of the blank photographing mode, the presence of image data in the volatile buffer memory that has not been transferred to the recording medium is checked and an indication is provided when untransferred image data is present in the volatile buffer memory.

24. (Previously Presented) The photographing operation control device according to claim 13, wherein, upon selection of the blank photographing mode, the presence of image data in the volatile buffer memory that has not been transferred to the recording medium is checked and an indication is provided when untransferred image data is present in the volatile buffer memory.

25. (Previously Presented) The photographing operation control device according to claim 1, wherein when said recording medium sensing processor senses that said recording medium is not mounted, and said blank photographing operation performing processor performs the photographing operating in the blank photographing mode, the blank photographing operation performing processor does not transmit image

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data stored in the buffer memory to a recording medium when the recording medium is mounted.